

The Opposite of a False Witness

Acts 22:12-16

Midweek of Lent 3

Introduction

According to the **Catechism**, the **8TH COMMANDMENT**, *You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor* means *we should fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way*. A false witness is one who lies, betrays, and slanders others.

False Witnesses

Let's take a closer look at the false witnesses at Jesus' trial. They said, *"This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and rebuild it in three days'"* (**Matthew 26:61**). In **John 2**, when Jesus had just cleared the temple, He was asked for a sign to show by what authority He did these things. He replied, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"* (**John 2:19**). John goes on to say that He was talking about His body and the disciples remembered this after His resurrection. The Pharisees thought He was talking about the temple and questioned Him about it. They didn't understand what Jesus was saying and twisted the truth. They told lies because they were blind to the truth. If a witness can't see, they can't be a true witness.

True Witnesses

Paul was told he would be a witness for Christ to everyone of what he has seen and heard. On the road to Damascus, Paul saw the risen Lord as He called, *"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"* (**Acts 9:4**). In **Galatians 1**, Paul says that after his conversion, he didn't go to Jerusalem, but to Arabia. It is believed that while he was there, the Lord taught him what he needed to know for his ministry. Paul was a true witness, spending his life in defense of the Christ of the Gospel, sharing the truth of Jesus with anyone who would listen. And what did he receive for being a true witness? (Read **2 Corinthians 11:24-28**). In this world, truth is not prized very highly. Jesus, whose kingdom is not of this world, told Pilate, *"Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice"* (**John 18:37**). Jesus is looking for true witnesses.

Recovery of Sight

While we don't walk around telling lies about Jesus, are we true witnesses or false ones? We often talk about how our lives are witnesses. We like to think it means that the good things we do tell others about Jesus. But what about when we fall, when we fail? What kind of a witness are we then? Everything we do is a witness, true or false, for Jesus. At best, our lives, by themselves, send mixed signals to the world about Jesus. I just read a poll that said that 46% of young people said they know someone who professes to be a Christian. Almost no one noticed any difference in their lives that would cause them to be interested in Jesus. Jesus is looking for true witnesses. How can we be true witnesses?

A Parable from Paul

Paul's situation is parallel to ours. In **Acts 9**, when Ananias laid his hands on Paul and prayed for him, something like scales fell from his eyes and he could see. This is symbolic that before his conversion, he couldn't see; he was blind to the truth. Now, he could see the truth of Christ. Now, he would be a true witness. When we return to the Lord in repentance, He will take the scales from our eyes, so we can see the truth and be true witnesses. **RETURN FROM FALSE WITNESS, RETURN TO THE LORD.**

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
